

## GLOBALIZATION AND THE VICTIMS OF EXCLUSION: FROM A LIBERATION ETHICS PERSPECTIVE

*To my friend the philosopher Professor  
Dr. Odera Oruka from Nairobi  
University (Kenya), assassinated in  
December 1996.*

In this lecture<sup>1</sup> I will merely refer to some fundamental theses.<sup>2</sup> The strategy of the argument will take the following path: I will begin with some older reflections by Paul Ricouer about universal civilization and its particular cultures (§1). I will summarize a non-eurocentric historical perspective that is pertinent to the Modern Globalizing System (§2). I will describe the asymmetrical location of the “participants” that has resulted from the violent process of inclusion in the World System (§3). I will refer to and explain three demarcation criteria from which I will conclude that a Moral Philosophy that is exclusively “formal discursive” and inadvertently hegemonic cannot be “critical” (§4). I will point out certain aspects through which one can see ethical and critical demands within the horizon of globalization (§5). To conclude (§6) I will suggest some relevant topics for future discussions.

### § 1. UNIVERSAL CIVILIZATION AND PARTICULAR CULTURES?

In 1961, as I arrived in Paris from a work-related stay of two years in Israel, I had the chance to attend some classes at the Sorbonne and to read an article by Paul Ricouer published in *Esprit* entitled “World Civilization and National Cultures.”<sup>3</sup> According to Ricouer, “World Civilization” — which already entails the entire problematic of “globalization” — is constituted on the basis of the scientific spirit,<sup>4</sup> the technical and instrumental structures, and a rationalized and universalized politics and economy which in turn generate a form of life that eventually becomes globalized (“the inevitable standardization of housing, clothing. . .”).<sup>5</sup> But when one asks, with an optimism that is appropriate to the times, about the signification of such a civilization, Ricouer points out that such questioning amounts to “coming to terms with the only humanity”<sup>6</sup>: an entry of the masses to the elemental goods, a struggle against illiteracy, and an increment in the means of consumption and culture. Even though

he already writes critically:

En même temps qu'une promotion de l'humanité, le phénomène d'universalization constitue une sorte de subtile destruction [. . . du] noyau créateur des grandes civilisations, des grande cultures, ce noyau à partir duquel nous interprétons la vie [. . .] le noyau méthoque et mythique de l'humanité.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, world cultures have to reckon with the other cultures that belong to great national civilization, regional cultures constituted upon an ethical and mythical nucleus,<sup>8</sup> cultures built by institutions that are not universal but rather particular:

l'humanité ne s'est pas constituée dans un seul style culturel, mais a pris dans de figures historiques cohérentes, *closes*: les cultures.<sup>10</sup>

Cultures that cannot recreate are unable to develop, and thus, die.<sup>11</sup> Today those cultures that cannot adapt to "scientific rationalization" and to the secularization of nature will not be able to survive. It seems, then, as if Ricouer believes that the westernization of the world is inexorable, since only a few cultures (the great cultures notwithstanding) will be able to resist the affront of the Western and Christian culture that has produced a notion of westernization based on scientific rationalization and secularization:

<sup>7</sup>Lecture delivered at the St. Louis University in St. Louis Missouri at the conference on "Globalization: Problems and Prospects," October 18–20, 1996, with the participation of Karl-Otto Appel and Jürgen Habermas.

<sup>8</sup>I am in the process of finishing a book on *liberation ethics* where these topics are discussed in detail.

<sup>9</sup>See Ricouer, 1964.

<sup>10</sup>For our philosophers, science is exclusively Greek and European, from Galileo, to Descartes and Newton (Ibid. pp. 274–275). They forget, for instance, the scientific legacy of the Arabs and the Chinese (See Needham) etc.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 278–279.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 280. At its moment, we carried out a reflection that was applied to the Latin American reality (See Dussel, 1966 and 1996). It is important to note that over thirty years after the publication of Ricouer's article, a work with almost the same title has just been released: *National Culture and the New Global System* (Buell, 1994.)

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>15</sup>Here a sort of non-communicable incommensurability is suggested.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 284.

<sup>17</sup>"Telle est la loi tragique de la création d'une culture" (Ibid., p. 285).

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 280–281.

<sup>19</sup>In syncretism lies the possibility of an intercultural dialogue from which a world culture that is the result of a syncretic unity of all cultures will be born. Ricouer cannot accept a hybrid solution because of a Eurocentric *a priori*.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 288. Citing Heidegger ("It is necessary to lose ourselves in our own origins"), Ricouer calls upon Europeans to return to their Greek, Hebrew and Christian origins, "por avoir en face de soi un autre que soi, il faut avoir un soi" (Ibid., p. 287). These the basic topic of Ricouer's recent critical volume on Levinas: *Soi même come un autre* (Ricouer, 1990).

<sup>21</sup>See Zea, 1957.

<sup>22</sup>See Fanon, 1963.

<sup>23</sup>See my works from that period "Iberoamérica en la historia universal" (Dussel, 1966) y en "Cultura latinoamericana y cultura nacional" (Dussel, 1968).

<sup>24</sup>Dussel, 1973 #19, v. 1, p. 153. "Philosophy of Liberation" had already been born.

<sup>25</sup>See Ebousi Boulaga, 1977 and Hountondji, 1977.

<sup>26</sup>Ngũgũ, 1986.

Il faut d'une part se réenraciner dans son passé, se refaire une âme nationale [. . .] Mais il faut en même temps, *pour entrer dans la civilisation moderne*, entrer dans la rationalité scientifique, technique, politique que exige bien souvent l'abandon pur et simple de tout un passé culturel.<sup>12</sup>

At any rate the question remains open for a move towards communication that is similar to the Ethics of Discourse:

Au syncrétisme<sup>13</sup> il faut opposer la communication, c'est-à-dire une relation dramatique dans laquelle tour à tour je m'affirme dans mon origine et je me livre à l'imagination d'autrui selon son autre civilisation.<sup>14</sup>

However, the aporia remains unresolved: on the one hand, there is a civilization as a universal System — predicated upon instrumental reason, essentially at the level of scientific and technical abstract structure and also predicated upon the process of modern rationalization — and on the other hand, there are some other cultures (the great cultures) that are ultimately incommunicable, cultures that are particular rather than universal, cultures that ought to mutually communicate but for which it remains to be seen how this communication is to be achieved.

One could conclude that there is universality at the instrumental level and particularity at the material level (in relation to the ethical and mythical nucleus) of each culture.

In Latin America, Leopoldo Zea in 1957, in his book *America en la historia*<sup>15</sup> identified a similar problem to the one delineated above. On his part, the Caribbean Latin American Franz Fanon confronted this very same problem in 1961 from the perspective of the oppressed colonials in *Les damnés de la terre*;<sup>16</sup> these questions were discussed at the time of my return to Latin America — after ten years in Europe.<sup>17</sup> In 1973, I would write my work, *Para un etica de la liberacion latinoamericana* — a philosophical and critical statement expressed from the periphery of the World System:

El europeo, y por ello su filosofía, ha universalizado su posición de dominador, conquistador, metrópoli imperial, y ha logrado, por una pedagogía prácticamente infalible, que las élites ilustradas sean, en las colonias, los subopresores que mantienen a los oprimidos en una *cultura del silencio*, cultura que no sabe decir su palabra, y que sólo escucha — por sus élites ilustradas, por sus filósofos europizados — una palabra que los aliena: los hace otros que sí mismos.<sup>18</sup>

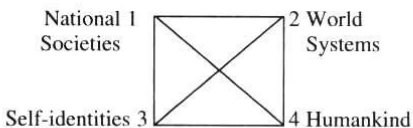
Also, some time after 1977, the same issue is being debated in Africa through philosophical works of authors such as Eboussi Boulaga and Paulin

Hountondji<sup>19</sup> debates that fertilized the thought on particularism and universalism. This debate led to the multicultural trend of Postcoloniality, a trend that since 1986 has found a point of reference in *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*<sup>20</sup> by Kenyan author NguNgu wa Thiong'o. In 1978, Edward Said published *Orientalism*,<sup>21</sup> a text which allowed for the discussion about anti-eurocentric theses.

The philosophical theme is always centered on the dialectics of universalism (of a modern civilization) and the notion of particularity (of the great traditional cultures of the colonial world). The question remains open to discuss-

<sup>21</sup>See Said, 1978. See a revision of his thesis in Said, 1993.

<sup>22</sup>In effect, Mike Featherstone (1993), is coordinating a work on *Global Culture* that begins with the question: Is there a global culture? (p. 1, a question that swiftly becomes: it might be possible to refer to the globalization of culture (Ibid.). Robertson tells us that "during the second half of the 1980's globalization (and its problematic variance, internationalization) became a commonly used term in intellectual, business, media and other circles—acquiring in the process a number of meanings, with varying degrees of precision" (Ibid., p. 19.). For Robertson globalization is a recent phenomenon through which "all is structured as the whole." (p. 20). Robertson's article implies that such a globalization began to speed up since 1880 and that from 1960 it entered the "phase of uncertainty" (specially in 1990). ("Mapping the Global Condition," p. 27) Robertson himself, in his work *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (Robertson, 1994) describes the "global field" as a field with four poles:



2: Relativization of national society; 2–3: Real politic-humanity problematic; 3–4: Relativization of self-identities; 4–1: Individual-society problematic; 1–3: Relativization of citizenship; 4–2: Relativization of societal reference (p. 27). This work is filled with suggestions to be taken into account. Frederick Buell (*National Culture and the New Global System*, 1994) gives an excellent description of debates in the USA about this problem, es-

pecially pertaining to the Post-colonial debate (pp. 217 ss) from within Marxist tradition (pp. 265 ss), as well as within the debates on Postmodernity and Globalization (pp. 325 ss).

<sup>23</sup>Taylor, pp. 72–73.

<sup>24</sup>See Wallerstein 1974. Also Wallerstein, 1984–1995.

<sup>25</sup>See "The World System as Philosophical Problem" in Dussel, 1966 b, pp. 214 ff.

<sup>26</sup>Frank, 1987, 1990, 1992 and 1992b.

<sup>27</sup>See Blaut, 1992–1993.

<sup>28</sup>For Hegel "world history travels from East to West; therefore, Europe is the end of universal history" (Die Weltgeschichte geht von Ostem nach Westen; denn Europa ist schlechthin das Ende der Weltgeschichte" in Hegel, 1955, p. 243) See my lectures at Goethe Universität in Frankfurt: Dussel, 1995, conf. 1.

<sup>29</sup>It might appear trivial to allude to the following ordinary examples; however, they reveal a deeper implication: the seven-day week originates in Mesopotamia; the scale that symbolizes justice is actually that of Osiris, with which she could weigh the good deeds performed in life by the dead ones of Egypt; our current dressing codes, for instance, the use of trousers, nowadays also widespread in women, was introduced in Mongolia by the horsemen of the Euro-Asian plains, approximately 8000 years ago; paper and the printing press was well known in China during the VI century B.C.

<sup>30</sup>For a more detailed discussion see work in progress *Ética de la liberación*, in the historical introduction section I and 2.

<sup>31</sup>The Neolithic revolution, contrary to Hegel's claims, travels from Mesopotamia and Egypt, right at the climax of the Paleolithic age and without direct connections, towards the East: India, China and pre-Colombian cultures.



sion; it is currently debated with fervor leading decidedly towards the problematics of "culture."<sup>22</sup> Charles Taylor writes advocating a multicultural yet non-globalizing politics:

But merely, on the human level, one could argue that it is reasonable to suppose that cultures that have provided the horizon of meaning for large numbers of human beings, of diverse characters and temperaments, over a long period of time — that has, in other words, articulated their sense of the good, the holy, the admirable — are almost certain to have something that deserves our admiration and respect, even if it is accompanied by much that we have to abhor and reject.<sup>23</sup>

## § 2. TOWARDS A HISTORY OF GLOBALIZATION

Immanuel Wallerstein, had already since 1974<sup>24</sup> advanced the notion of a "World System." Departing from this thesis, Andre Gunder Frank asserts that the "World System"<sup>25</sup> does not originate in Capitalism but it has existed for at least 5000 years.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Jim Blaut is of the opinion that Modernity does not exactly begin with Capitalism but rather with the European "invasion" of America in 1492.<sup>27</sup> I believe that this question is both complex and needs to be differentiated. Before entering this debate, and as a preamble, I would like to outline a certain historical perspective which will allow us to place the discussion within a different horizon (neither a Eurocentric, nor a Hegelian<sup>28</sup> one).

Many of the instances of the system that is nowadays globalized have a long history.<sup>29</sup> In our interpretation the "World System" has certain stages that we would like to briefly recall here.<sup>30</sup>

*a. Stage I. Mesopotamia and Egypt.* Of the six regions of what is considered the high Neolithic<sup>31</sup> culture (Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, pre-Aryan China, Mesoamerica, and the Inca region), only Egypt and Mesopotamia participated in an exchange of civilizing experiences that took place constantly since the IV<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. At this juncture, a "system" that is now globalized began to take shape historically, according to the plausible thesis of A. G. Frank.<sup>32</sup> In a non-eurocentric conception of history it is necessary to remember that Egypt had an originary Bantu component coming from the *black* African South.<sup>33</sup> Thus, in the Bantu culture the dead are buried with the instruments used while still alive. (This can be observed both in a present day tomb in Ghana as well as in the pyramid of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen, whose hundreds of utensils can be seen at the Museum of Cairo.) Similarly, Osiris' myth of the resurrection of the dead (a myth which required a culture of Pyramids and mausoleums) arrived via Judeo-

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Christian thought, in Europe and America, where one can find cemeteries,<sup>34</sup> as in the Muslim world, from Morocco to the Philippines. Normative enunciations such as “I fed bread to the hungry, gave water to thirsty, clothed the naked one”<sup>35</sup> or “that the powerful ought not oppress the poor in order to do justice to the orphaned and the widow”<sup>36</sup> are today critical principles still in use in Western Culture since their origin in the first stage of the “inter-regional system.”

*b. Stage II. The Culture of the Horse and Iron.* Due to the use of the horse<sup>37</sup> and of iron,<sup>38</sup> especially in the manufacturing of weapons for the wars of the great invaders, the “inter-regional system” becomes connected. These peoples, inappropriately called “Indo-Europeans,” have also been referred to as invaders even though their “invasions” cannot really be labeled such. The “system” expands by becoming connected to China, and thus initiating what will be known as the “Route of Silk,” reaching India and thus incorporating the “Aryans” of Rig Veda, including the Persians and Medes of Mesopotamia, and the Hitites from Turkey, the Greek and Latins of the Mediterranean, and the Germans in Northern Europe. The “system” that becomes now globalized owes so many of its “institutions” to the peoples from the Iron and Horse stage that it is frequently held that Modernity is the sole inheritor of the Stage II of the Inter-Regional Asiatic-Afro-Mediterranean System; conversely, it is frequently forgotten that China, India and most of the Muslim world are just as *authentic inheritors* of this system as the Europeans. The unilinear syllogism Greece-Rome-Europe is false. Baghdad

<sup>32</sup>I will not refer to it as “World System” because the exclusion of “Amerindia” extended up to the European “invasion” at the end of the fifteenth century. Rather, I will refer to it as a Afro-Asian “Inter-regional Systema, at the stage I.

<sup>33</sup>The Egyptian used to refer to himself as *kmt* which meant black, synonym of a civilized subject, while the white subject (in Egyptian language “red,” a pejorative term) was the barbarian of the Mediterranean. It is, then, imperative to acknowledge a black-African component of Egyptian culture.

<sup>34</sup>The Greek, Indo-European tradition states the immortality of the soul; therefore, cremation of corpses is practiced since the body is the origin of all evil.

<sup>35</sup>Chapter 125, Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.

<sup>36</sup>From the Epilogue of the Babylonian Codex of Hammurabi.

<sup>37</sup>Horses served as a means of transportation from Mongolia and China, through the deserts of Euro-Asian plains, to India, Persia, and the Mediterranean. See Narr, 1965, pp. 578 ff.

<sup>38</sup>A metal that produces a technological revolution: from the introduction of harnesses, nails, horse-shoe, the ax, the shovel, pickax, to the improvement of agricultural plowing system, etc.

<sup>39</sup>Phaedrus, 274d.

<sup>40</sup>In every culture from Egypt to China, from the Aztecs to the Incas, that which is modern signals to the center from which the best information of the “system” is managed; from which the best and newest instruments (material as well as symbolic) are used; from which political and religious power and economic wealth are administered; in short, the modern signals to the most developed. The rest are “barbarians,” non-humans, those who are outside, the “periphery.” The modern in each culture is valuable because of its ethnocentricity. The “modernity” of the World System claims validity for *all the other cultures*; and this is a novelty in world history.

<sup>41</sup>Its octagonal mosques resemble Greek-Byzantine art, unlike later Gothic churches built with a different spirit.

is an earlier and more relevant continuation of Athens than Paris or Köln — the former is more of an inheritor of Greek thought than the later. One should not forget either that Athens was a colony of the Egyptian Saïs (its masters in economics, science and religion: the Neith, goddess of Saïs is the Palas Atheneas, and Plato correctly asserted that the Egyptian Toth had taught Greeks the numbers, calculus, geometry, and astronomy).<sup>39</sup> The armed riders of the Iron stage organized, then, the first political institutions and occupied vast territories, thus dominating many peoples that paid taxes and were frequently reduced to slavery. The Inter-regional system expanded from the Hittite Empire, whose capital was Hattusa, throughout the Persian Empire, the Indian kingdoms, and the Chinese Empire, until it reached the Hellenistic world which founded Seleucia in the heart of Mesopotamia (capital of Seleucid Hellenes), a city that was the “center” of the connections that sprang from China to Hispania. This primitive *globalization* was already intercontinental: from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Here is an exchange of techniques and findings related to astronomy, agriculture, economics, and politics that persists in the present World System.

*c. Stage III. From Byzantium to Baghdad.* It would seem that the domination of the Iron era produced endless oppression in the great empires. It would also seem, as Max Weber affirms, that, in the shackles of the slaves and the exploited ones, a critical ethics of universalistic rebellion of the victims was propagated. The sage’s critical formulations, exchanged with Egypt and Mesopotamia, were expressed in sacred books that, once re-read in situations of extreme material scarcity, produced, as if by an explosion, the third stage of the “Inter-Regional System.” This stage comprises the following cultures and territories: first of all, the Christian Byzantine culture; the Muslim culture (which will reach to Morocco in the Atlantic, to Poitiers in the north in 732 A.C., to the south of the Sahara, to the plateau via the golden Horde of the Mongols in what is now Russia, to Delhi, or Angra; and to the Mindanao in the Philippines in the fifteenth century through Malacca in the Pacific), and finally the Latin and Germanic cultures. The “System” will extend from Samarkand and Bukhara (to the south of the present day Russia) up to Kabul around Baghdad (founded in 762 and destroyed by the Mongols in 1258) which was the model of the “civilized” and the “modern” for five hundred years.<sup>40</sup> The *falasifa* (philosophy in Arabic) acquires a classical splendor in the ninth century when Al Kindi (who dies in Kufic, Syria in 1873 A.D.) initiates the first process of modern secularization in philosophy, thus making philosophy different from the *Koran* and using it as a rational hermeneutical method for scriptural commentary. Ibn Sina

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(Avicenna, who died in 1037 A.D.) who lived in Bukhara (now to the south of Russia), rediscovered and impeccably elaborated Aristotle's logic. The Muslim Culture is the first great heir to Greek culture.<sup>41</sup> Europe, the Germanic Europe, was a peripheral region of the Mediterranean, a "remote" corner which was never central (not even during the Roman Empire) to the "Inter-Regional System" which encompassed China. The poorly labelled "Middle Ages"<sup>42</sup> were nothing but the European perception of its own darkness and its dependency on a "central" culture: the "Muslim culture." The first prominent European novel, though there are some others before, *Don Quixote*, "the knight of the sad figure," (who fought against windmills)<sup>43</sup> is attributed, according to its author, to an Arab writer. Could a "barbarian" European write a "literary masterpiece" of

<sup>42</sup>For world history, the label "Middle Ages" is an invalid historical category; it does not make any sense for the Muslim world, India, China, or Amerindia. It only works for Europe.

<sup>43</sup>The windmill is a symbol of technological modernity. But one must not forget that windmills actually come from the Muslim world because, since 947 B.C. there were wind and water mills in Seistan, a town closed to Indo. Also in Basora, the Tigris River's flow was used to give motion to floating mill wheels. Modernity for Cervantes pays for the Armada with which Europeans, Spaniards, irrevocably defeat the Turks in the battle of Lepanto in 1571, a battle financed by the Latinoamerican silver extracted from the mines of Zacatecas and Potosí discovered in 1546.

<sup>44</sup>According to Braudel (1978) because of a letter written by a merchant Jew from Cairo (1095-1099 AC.), we know that Muslims knew all forms of credit and payment and all forms of commercial association; therefore, it was not in Italy that these commercial forms of transactions first emerged as it has been so readily accepted (p. 65). There was an extensive commercial network with currency instruments that allowed for the management of money among the nations of the Inter-regional system. Transactions of agricultural products developed the milling industry of cereals; for instance, 100 thousand camels were used exclusively for the commercialization of dates. Muslims caravans that connected India and China with the Mediterranean reached up to six thousand camels. This commercial network gave rise to multiple industries. Merchants began to make their calculations with Arabic numbers, which actually originated in India, and used the decimal system

and the numeral zero, along with algebra, etc.

<sup>45</sup>See Wallerstein, 1974, vol 1. Also see the eight volumes of Chaunu, 1955, *Séville et l'Atlantique*.

<sup>46</sup>For Hegel modernity covers a geography that, departing from the Renaissance (Italy) passing through the Reformation (Alemania), the English parliament, and the French Revolution, reaches the Enlightenment (specifically, the German and French versions). As it can be gathered from this, there is nothing "modern" to Spain Portugal and Latin America. We have referred to this vision as provincial and Eurocentric, since it sees Modernity as developing from within, as a result of an intrinsic European development which began in the Middle Ages. Such, however, is not the case. Southern Europe (the "Latin" one), the center of the World System, makes of this region the departing point of Modernity. Latin America is the first *periphery*, a century before the Anglo-Saxon America (i.e. New Holland, colony of the Holland which at the time of settlement was a Spanish colony) becomes, in the seventeenth century, the New England of the thirteen original colonies.

<sup>47</sup>This explains that Luther's protest, which could have ended up as the rankings of one more heretic of Medieval Europe, could now "reach" the center of the System and thus could dispense with the mediation of Mediterranean Rome, a Rome that along with the Mediterranean will become a peripheral culture of Atlantic Europe (thus inverting the ego-political situation). The Eurocentricity implicit in the so-called "discovery" of America thus explains the world scope of the Protestant Reformation.

<sup>48</sup>Wallerstein, 1974, vol. 2.

such innovative style? It was more plausible to attribute it to those thought as “cultivated,” undoubtedly the Arabs who were centenarian writers of subtle “stories” (protonovels), such as the *Arabian Nights*.

All of the elements, or at least most of them, that Weber identifies in the European Middle Ages and Renaissance as “internally” constitutive of Modernity, had been thoroughly realized in the Muslim World centuries before.<sup>44</sup>

*d. Stage IV. The “World System”: Europe as “center.”* Up until the “invasion” of the American Continent in 1492, the Baltic Sea (the industrial “Northern Europe” of Hegel) and the Sea of Japan were the *most remote* regions from the “center” (at that moment Baghdad and India).

The unexpected “invasion” of the Amerindian cultures (i.e., Mexico from 1519 and Perú from 1529) will give to peripheral Europe a “vantage point” when compared to China — more populated and at least at the same level of technological development as Renaissance Europe. The *first Modernity*,<sup>45</sup> in its humanistic and imperial sense, will be advanced by Spain as a result of the unity of the Hispanic nation brought about by Castille and Aragon in 1476 through the Port of Seville; this unification (new center) will be the predecessor of what eventually will become the first (and only) “World System.” The experience and wealth of Genoa and other Renaissance Italian cities was not pertinent to the lands where the Reformation occurred.<sup>46</sup> Such experience, along with that of the ancient Arab emirates was rather directed towards the Atlantic — an “ocean,” up to that moment, devoid of culture — a horizon that will extend to the Caribbean (the new Mediterranean), when capitalism was imminent.

Northern Europe, up to that moment always dependent and peripheral to the Latin Mediterranean world (with the relative exception of the Vikings and the Hansa Confederation, though these themselves were dependent on the Mediterranean), is now *directly* connected to the “center,” now located in the Atlantic.<sup>47</sup> The emancipation of Holland from Spain (at the beginning of the seventeenth century) and its mighty fleet transformed Amsterdam from 1630 onward into the heir of Seville.<sup>48</sup> We are now in the *second Modernity*, the properly bourgeois modernity of a mercantile “system” that will progressively replace the imperial Iberian superpowers. Since the “invasion” of Latin America in 1492, the “decentralization” in the sixteenth century of the “ancient system” that had gravitated around Baghdad, introduces the shattering revolution of the scientific paradigm into peripheral Medieval Europe. The sixteenth century is nothing but the period of this revolution — when in 1520 Magellan returns

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from “circling” the world, there begins, “empirically,” a new phase of the world’s astronomic cosmology. The *new scientific paradigm* is only “expressed” at the beginnings of the seventeenth century (as a result of the previous Hispanic revolution) with Galileo (condemned in 1616) and Descartes (disciple of the Spanish Jesuits, who devoted to the practice of the “act of constriction,” which in turn was the origin of the *cogito* is the author in Amsterdam in 1636 of *Le Discourse de la methode*). The rest is already known. However, we would like to gather a few conclusions pertinent to our topic.

The “World System” that reaches a new stage of *globalization* at the end of the twentieth century is already five hundred years old — Stage III, organized around Baghdad, was also five hundred years old. This System is that of Modernity, of mercantile Capitalism (first under Spanish and then under Dutch domination), of industrial capitalism (under British domination), and transnational Capitalism (under North American domination since 1945, the end of the so-called Second World War). This “System” is not merely an instrumental one as Paul Ricouer and others indicated; it also contains *material* cultural moments (symbols, myths, values and traditions). It is rather ambiguously a technological system (based on instrumental reason), but it displays also many material instances (such as the ones mentioned above) and discursive instances (i.e., political institutions), and so on. Furthermore, for the *first time* a World System confronts *all* the other cultures, which in the Asian and Mediterranean region (obviously from China to India up to the Middle East and Northern Africa) had been fertilized *internally* by ancient moments of the very same “system” (Stages II and III). China, for instance, is perfectly reticent to the modernity of the World System, because for thirty centuries it has lived with such a system (from its Stages II and III); therefore, it has an internal capacity to assimilate and adapt. India, as a victim of colonialism is the exception. The Muslim reality, given its comprehension of the world, draws from internal resources, originating in its first philosophical and Aristotelian Enlightenment in the ninth century, in order to encompass the secularized world (fundamentalism not withstanding, given that it is a non-essential epi-phenomenon). Latin America was the first assimilated and co-opted modern periphery (Latin

<sup>40</sup>See Luhmann, 1984.

<sup>41</sup>This reality is found in exteriority — to express it in Levinas’ words — it is an extra-ontological and extra-linguistic reality that pertains to the languages of the World-System; it is a *prius* that precedes the “being” of the “comprehension of being” of the modern World-System.

<sup>42</sup>Chapter V: “Guerra colonial y trastornos mentales,” en Fanon, 1963, p. 228.

<sup>43</sup>In my work in progress *Ética de la*

*Liberación*, I devote the whole fourth chapter to analyze this “original negation,” alienation as negation of alterity as I will architectonically refer to it in the future. This “originary negation” is the *co-option* of the other in the dominant system; it implies an alienation of the other’s alterity, a negation of the other’s possibility to live, a negation to participate in the center’s discourse; in short, the inability of the other to accomplish his/her goals (including the cultural ones). See Dussel, 1973, 1985.

America is the originary “barbarian” required by Modernity for its own definition). With the exception of few ethnicities, still today resisting the invasion, destruction, and assimilation, the destruction of the great majority of Amerindian cultures was the origin of “mestizaje.” This is not the case with the Bantu world or any other “non-universal,” indigenous culture, cultures whose process of “assimilation” is more complex.

At any rate, concomitantly with the *globalization* of modernity, the almost absolute *exteriority* of other sophisticated cultures had progressively diminished. But, suddenly, the capacity for expansion is halted and thus a process of *exclusion* begins, out of the internal crisis within this very World System. Let us consider, then, the processes of *inclusion* and *exclusion* that are both violent and lethal.

### § 3. THE ASYMMETRICAL INCLUSION OF THE VICTIMS OF THE WORLD SYSTEM

From the fifteenth century onwards, Europe, as a secondary and peripheral culture, dialectically expands its horizons and *includes* (subsumes) first and foremost Amerindia (from Mexico to Peru), the *richest* area in metal and most densely populated in its urban centers. For three centuries Europe will accumulate wealth and military technology, will monopolize power, and will lead in the management of the World System’s centrality (not anymore in the sense meant by Wallerstein, but incorporating many of the aspects of the autopoiesis of the “system” in the sense meant by Luhman)<sup>49</sup> in order to occupy certain regions of Asia and, since the Berlin Congress (in 1885, just a century ago), to prepare for the “invasion” of Africa. It was only since the fifteenth century that the purported “superiority” of Europe was exerted on the Amerindian cultures; these cultures did not know iron, gun powder, and the horse. Such was not the case with Africa which resisted until the times of the Industrial Revolution, thus proving that until the fifteenth century the so called European superiority was ineffectual. The “colonial world” is the victim; it is a *denied* and *divided world*, an excluded world. In relation to this Franz Fanon wrote:

Como es una *negación sistemática del Otro*, una decisión furiosa de privar al Otro de todo atributo de humanidad, el colonialismo empuja al pueblo dominado a plantearse constantemente la pregunta: ¿Quién soy en realidad?<sup>50,51</sup>

The point here is to locate historically, empirically and concretely this “negation of the Other.”<sup>52</sup> The ethics of discourse indicates that if there is asymmetry among the participants concerned in the argumentative community, the



joint decision is *invalid*. We will show how a *radical invalidity* characterizes *any present decision* in the modern World System.

*a. The Irrationality of Violence as Origin.* From the fifteenth century onwards, the modern World System will *always expand itself by means of an initial violence which constitutes the relation among systems, nations, cultures, and people*. Modern Europe, since the “invasion” of Amerindia in 1492, *never* initiated the process of “inclusion” of the other culture (The Caribbean Indians were exterminated in the course of one century; so, only the *Mexican Conquest* can be construed as the originary “inclusion” in reference to the whole process of inclusion carried out by Europe).<sup>53</sup> The invasion of America originates the propagation of “modern subjectivity” in a practical sense: the *ego conquiro* (I conquer) precedes the *ego cogito*. Neither Europe (Spain, Portugal, England,

<sup>53</sup>See my book Dussel, 1995, conf. 3 (pp. 37ss engl. ed.).

<sup>54</sup>I am referring to the violent occupation of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines in 1888, approximately a century ago. The Philippines courageous resistance against the North American “invasion” resulted in the loss of two hundred and fifty thousand lives.

<sup>55</sup>“Before the Industrial revolution the “conquest” in Africa and Asia was carried out solely in limited islands and territories (Because Portugal still had intentions of building a “World-Empire” — much in the manner of Charles V of Spain, who in the face of financial failure must abdicate in 1557 —, Angola and Mozambique were perhaps the exceptions to the pattern that characterized the conquest of Asia and Africa). Wallerstein makes it clear that the “World-System” does “not have an imperial project (a project that would impose an official language, culture, religion; and political, military and economic organization). With a “Company of the West and East Indies,” Amsterdam can commercially organize the system. There is, then, a simplification by negation of the *quality* in favor of *quantity*: only “black numbers” matter for book-keeping purposes.

<sup>56</sup>Bartolomé de las Casas in the midst of sixteenth century Latin America proposed in his work *De Único Modo* that Europeans must rely on rational arguments and testimonies of morally virtuous life, rather than resorting to violence (see Dussel, 1955, confer. 5.3)

<sup>57</sup>I insist on the adjective “so-called,” because it was not a “world” war, but actually an intracapitalist war triggered by the hegemony

of the World System. Germany and Japan attempted to participate in a market-economy monopolized by England, and to a lesser degree by France and other “traditional” Central European powers; the United States’ defeat of Germany and Japan wrested the hegemony from the United Kingdom. We are specifically referring to the North American hegemony that since 1945 allowed for the colonial emancipation of Africa and Asia. From 1989 such hegemony for the first time in the history of humanity rests in the hands of *one military super Austin Power*.

<sup>58</sup>Some fifteen million Indians died as a result of violence carried out with sophisticated arms, with dogs trained to kill Indians; this violence was also evident in the slavery and devastation of Indians in plantations and mines and as a consequence of diseases foreign to the indigenous population of the Americas . . . the conquest was the first process of *globalization*.

<sup>59</sup>The Christian nations of England, Portugal, Holland and France, stained their white hands with the blood of over thirteen million African peasants, sold as beast of burdens in the south of the thirteen colonies, in Cuba, in Cartagena de Indias, in North-Eastern Brazil. In face of a sensitive and global ethical consciousness, the complicity of these nations still awaits its own “Nuremberg Trial.”

<sup>60</sup>Bandits who, in the name of England and France, looted Spanish ships filled with the silver extracted from the mines in Zacatecas, Durango Guancavélica, and Potosí, at the cost of Indians who rested lifeless at the bottom of these mines.

France, etc.) nor the United States<sup>54</sup> *ever* initiated their relation with peripheral cultures (in Latin America since the sixteenth century and in Asia since the eighteenth century)<sup>55</sup> with a peaceful proposition based on rational arguments.<sup>56</sup> This relation was *always* and solely carried out by the *violence of weaponry*. Spanish, Portuguese, British, French and North American armies occupied strategic territories. These nations defeated their opponents on the basis of military technological superiority, *unconditionally* subjugating them to their domination. This is the “other face of Modernity,” a face that has been ignored since Kant, a face which is, *constitutive* of modernity’s “being” and of the World System whose most recent *globalization* is herewith being considered (in the era of the transnationals and after the so-called<sup>57</sup> Second World War). These are but a few instances of Modernity’s *violent irrationality*: The colonial conquest in Latin America by Spaniards and Portuguese,<sup>58</sup> in North America by Anglo-Saxons (who still celebrate at Thanksgiving the Native American offering so that the colonials would not starve — colonials who, as a gesture of gratitude, initiated a fierce battle that did not spare a single Native American). This battle is still praised today in the American Western film (where it meets with the universal complicity of audiences). Similar battles occurred in French Canada, in enslaved Africa,<sup>59</sup> in the filibustering<sup>60</sup> of the Caribbean, in the opium war of China, or in the violent occupation of India, — where all were murdered who would “compete” with the British textile industry and thus the centenarian production of silk was destroyed.

*b. Economic exploitation as structure.* The despotic dominance over the bodies of the new colonial servants was structured on the basis of an economic system which was founded not even on an unequal exchange, but on the simple extraction, pillaging, or illegal appropriation of *all resources that could be exploited* through military dominance. Indians were sent by means of the system of *encomiendas* — a system characterized by gratuitous labor — to work in the fields and later to work in the *haciendas* (farms) where they received fictitious salaries; they were sent to the mines where they labored their lives away in the *mita*. Africans were commodified as slaves, used and slaughtered *like animals* (treated as pure merchandise deprived of fundamental rights such as marriage, paternity or any other right known to humans; their bodies could be used sexually or economically by the slave “masters” who had full rights over their lives, including their sadistic torture and their extermination). The mining wealth (gold and silver) was simply possessed by the colonials who had to pay taxes to the Crown; the rest of the colonials’ revenues would then be funneled into

the European world market in Europe (the first true world market whose first currency was coined with the silver extracted by the indigenous contingent in Mexico and Peru or by the African slaves later in Minas Gerais, Brazil). This is the “originary accumulation” of colonial extraction.<sup>61</sup>

When the mercantilism promoted by the extraction of metals and tropical products was transformed into Industrial Capitalism (circa 1750), the World System in its very center will commence the accumulation of a surplus (*sensus strictus*). In Europe, the system would restructure the colonial contract under British economy, thus initiating an uneven exchange with the textile industry. Around 1870 the accumulation of wealth and technology allows for the expansion of imperialism, territorially opening railroad lines and crossing the oceans with steamships. Great areas (Argentina, Canada, Australia, etc.) are incorporated in the World System by means of the gigantic extraction of agricultural and mining products. The periphery will always remain in an asymmetric position.

The present stage of transnational capitalism now focuses on the periphery; its capital is now invested in industries of less relevance. By doing so, capitalism absorbs the low salary of miserable external proletariat (in Asia or Latin America). The asymmetric relation is incontestable. The Great Seven (the group of the seven, G7) decide the destiny of the rest of humanity. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the United States, Japan and Europe (whose population does not reach 15% of the total world's population) controls, uses, consumes, and destroys irresponsibly up to 80% of the non-renewable resources of the world.

*c. The Metropolitan Political Domination:* We are not addressing the structure of inter-state politics. We are not addressing either the structure of national politics. Rather, we are referring to the political structure of the World System

<sup>61</sup>See Dussel, 1988.

<sup>62</sup>That so many European and North American philosophers based upon *ad hoc* arguments.

<sup>63</sup>The World-System is “global” but the fundamental European culture in the center of the system is “particular.” The European is prone to assume that his/her culture even the post-conventional one is the universal culture of the future (indeed, many Marxist from the center fell into this fetishism). The World-System has certainly cultural elements but is not a culture in the truest sense of the word, since the world system culture has been instrumentally expanded in an external fashion upon other cultures, other cultures that, in keeping with their capacity of resistance or creativity, either accepted or rejected the cultural values of the “World-System” (from eating in Burger King through drinking Coke, to wearing bluejeans).

In these examples “goods” are also *cultural* material objects which are consumed in different fashions: when one eats them, drinks them, and wears them.

<sup>64</sup>Latin America constituted the periphery as a dependent, alienated, and repetitive culture. Latin America, due to its constitutive “mestizaje,” was the first to receive the “impact” of the process of acculturation: the christianization of the Amerindian cultures and the forthcoming colonization (and here colonization is not used in the metaphorical sense implied by Habermas but in its original and real sense).

<sup>65</sup>Postmodernity viewed as the inherent culture of present “late capitalism.” See Jameson's excellent work, 1993. Also consider Aijaz Ahmad (Ahmad, 1987). Ahmad will later criticize Said (Ahmad, 1992).

which has been around for five hundred years. This metropolitan system (in a **de jure** assumption) was organized on the basis of violence into a political system which was termed, for instance, in Latin America, the state of the Indies (Spanish America) or the state of Brazil: the state without rights. The colonies (or ultramarine provinces) were totally subaltern to the power of the European Kings (Spanish, English, French, etc.), to their courts, councils, and other political organisms.

The political status of the inhabitants of the colonies was near to zero; these inhabitants had virtually no rights *vis-à-vis* the European power. In the World System the periphery was politically meaningless. The anti-colonial process of national emancipation (from the beginnings of the nineteenth century in Latin America and during the second half of the twentieth century in Africa and Asia) showed from its beginning the neo-colonial traces of the colonial period. The elites that led the emancipation process profited from the structural economic exploitation, from the military domination, and especially from the cultural domestication. The neocolonial situation is nothing but the continuation of the political and colonial dominance (including the military in which the Pentagon has replaced the military power of the old European metropolis, a power which is exerted via an incontestable computerized technology, as witnessed in the Gulf War, where the dominance of the center gave a clear example to the peripheral nations as to their possible destiny were they to oppose the New World Order, an Order triumphantly proclaimed by President George Bush).<sup>62</sup>

*d. Cultural Hegemony of the World System.* In the fifteenth century begins the cultural penetration into territories that, up to that juncture remained peripheral. Europe as the center of the World System culturally penetrates these peripheries; this system is not merely an instrumental institution (as it could be described by Ricoeur), but also, and rather ambiguously, a value-ridden cultural development in the sense of the *Lebenswelt* of a particular culture with pretensions of universality<sup>63</sup> (European culture).<sup>64</sup> Over the centuries cultural transmission was implemented by an educational system that moves from generation to generation (elementary and high school, higher and ecclesiastical, etc.) by means of books, newspapers etc. and by means of poetry, novels, and theater, etc. The metropolis was in charge of consolidating a colonial elite that was loyal to the incumbent empire. Violent repression warned against the possibility of a much desired emancipation. In the neocolonial stage, for the most part, though with a few exceptions, the neocolonial elite was in many ways co-opted by the incumbent culture, a modern and hegemonic culture. Mimesis in the cultivated avant-gardes was a sad reality.

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In the present times, the postmodern phenomenon<sup>65</sup> has taken up again this problem since the cultural means of expansion have been revolutionized. The repercussion of this revolution, carried out by mass-media industries such as the radio, the cinema and television, amounts to a radical change of the structure that underlies the constitution and consumption of cultural objects; therefore, the mode of exchange has been altered as has the cultural penetration of the peripheries carried out by the World System. These peripheries specifically referred to particular cultures affected by the process of globalization in the postcolonial age.

*e. The paradox of exclusion in globalization.* But the mechanisms of inclusion in the World System, far from diminishing, have actually augmented peripheral heterogeneity, given that the aggressive actions of domination have not destroyed their exteriority but rather have pushed this exteriority to its limits via a non-intentional politics of exclusion. Indeed, after five hundred years of the inauguration, development, and global culmination of the World System (identified with transnational Capitalism at the economic level), two critical and absolute limits coverage upon the whole structure of the World System: the first, the ecological destruction, a non-intentional and irreversible process, the consequence of a devastating technology which springs from the following short-term selection criteria: the increment of the rate of profit<sup>66</sup> (the essence of capital as valorization of value). Secondly, the impoverishment of most of humanity located in the postcolonial peripheral horizon of late capitalism; this, in many cases, is the beginning of the end (hunger, AIDS, etc., as in Africa, Bangladesh, Haiti, etc.); this involves the possible extinction of the Homo species (more due to ecological effects than due to a nuclear holocaust). Therefore, the extinction of life on earth is the last limit of the World System. We are then addressing the plight of the victims of such System.

#### **§ 4. IS THE ETHICAL CRITIC POSSIBLE? THE THREE CRITERIA OF DEMARCATION**

In order to have a scientific (and ethical) diagnoses of globalization we should make use of critical social science. Were we not to do so, our analysis would amount to praise of the blessings of globalization, and thus we would

<sup>66</sup>Marx would have spoken of "surplus value." In real socialism the criterion, equally devastating, was that of the increase of the rate of production.

<sup>67</sup>See Popper, 1968; Hempel, 1979, and other known authors.

<sup>68</sup>Op. cit., chapter 3; p. 59; p. 57.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>A critique of the Popperian position can be seen in Hinkelammert, 1984 (chapter 5: "La metodología de Popper"; pp. 157ss. This critique is related to the neo-liberal economy of Von Hayek. See also the excellent work by Gómez, 1995.

<sup>71</sup>See Kuhn, 1962.

non-intentionally occlude from consideration the negative and devastating repercussions of this process. Therefore, we would like to refer to three criteria of demarcation, the third criteria being the one that would allow us to initiate — or continue — a debate over this topic. Is the existence of a scientific human science or a critical philosophy possible? Is criticism opposed to sciences? Given their acriticism, do the non-critical social sciences cease being sciences and become fetishized ideologies?

### *Three Criteria of Demarcation*

- a) 1st criterion:    ▷ non-science  
                             ▷ science
- b) 2nd criterion     ▷ nature science  
                             ▷ human or social science
- c) 3rd criterion     ▷ human or social functional science  
                             ▷ human or social critical science

Given that a detailed analysis would go beyond the limit of this already long lecture, we will only *point* to the problem.

*a. The First Criterion of Demarcation of Science.* Epistemology approaches the problem of “demarcating” scientific, hypothetical and deductive knowledge on the basis of a theoretical explanatory definition of rationality.<sup>67</sup> The scientific character was denied the possibility of rivaling the theories and programs that did not fulfill the “strict” definition of science. For Popper, science consists of theories that are like “nets we throw in order to apprehend that which we call *the world*, in order to rationalize it, explain it and control it.”<sup>68</sup> The criteria of demarcation for the scientific is purely negative; it consists of the notion that for a given theory to be scientific it will have to define statements that are subject to falsification. The question consists, then, of the notion that departing from a “falsifying hypothesis,”<sup>69</sup> corroborated in some kind of “crucial experiment,” the theory in question could be refused, discarded, or falsified in its totality.<sup>70</sup>

Thomas Kuhn on the other hand, opened a new problematic horizon with the proposition of the existence of paradigm changes in the history of “scientific revolutions.”<sup>71</sup> He writes against Popper’s notion of the “crucial experiment”:

Una vez que ha alcanzado el *status* de paradigma, una teoría científica se declara inválida sólocuando se dispone de una candidato alternativo para que ocupe su lugar. Ningún proceso descubierto hasta ahora por el

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[a] Defiendo que la unidad descriptiva típica de los grandes logros científicos no es una hipótesis aislada sino más bien un *programa de investigación* [ . . . ] [b] la ciencia newtoniana, por ejemplo, no es sólo un conjunto de cuatro conjeturas (las tres leyes de la mecánica y la ley de gravitación). Esas cuatro leyes sólo constituyen el *núcleo firme* del programa newtoniano. [c] Pero este núcleo firme está tenazmente protegido por contra las refutaciones mediante un gran *cinturón protector* de hipótesis auxiliares. Y [d] lo que es mas importante, el programa de investigación tiene también heurística, esto es, una poderosa maquinaria para la solución de problemas que, con la ayuda de técnicas matemáticas sofisticadas, asimila *las anomalías* e incluso las convierte en evidencia positiva.<sup>76</sup>

Criticizing a) the inductivist justifications<sup>77</sup> and opposing Feyerabend in this last remark, Lakatos does not think that a knowledge based on *proven* propositions can exist; b) criticizing conventionalism — including Pierre Duhem's — which exaggerates the criteria of simplicity, and c) criticizing the one named by Lakatos "dogmatic falsationism" (naturalists), Lakatos adopts, in the last instance, d) a methodological falsification *positio*; from this position he attempts to overcome what he calls a "naive" attitude (partly a Popperian one) in order to adopt a "sophisticated" one.

Without participating in the internal debate further, one can see that debates about the first criterion have led to the result that the dogmatic and anti-metaphysical securities on what is science and what is not science have allowed a space for positions that are more complex and more empirical, more historical and less ideological.

#### *b. The Second Criterion for Demarcation: the "Social" Sciences*

There were also discussions about the second criterion of demarcation. When Adorno opposed Popper,<sup>78</sup> there seemed to be the need of demarcating the boundaries of "analytic" theory of science and dialectics.<sup>79</sup> But the problem required numerous mediations, since it was impossible to directly confront questions on the "first" criterion of demarcation (science/non-science, Popper's position) with the "second" and the "third" criterion simultaneously (Adorno's attempt).<sup>80</sup> Gadamer had proposed the problem of "comprehension" from a hermeneutical horizon.<sup>81</sup> Von Wright subtly describes the tenor of the discussion in 1971<sup>82</sup> and Apel clarifies his position in a valuable and voluminous work.<sup>83</sup> One can advance that the criteria of demarcation includes a new determination: the human or social sciences evolve by using "explanation" (of the



relationship subject-object when the "object" is the human being living in society) or "comprehension" (in the relation subject-subject; interpreting somehow the intentionality of the other subject or subjects, "comprehending" motivations and values, entering the "world" of the community of otherness.<sup>84</sup>

The social sciences must know how to use in a complementary fashion both the explanation of the facts, tracing them back to their "causes," and the hermeneutical "comprehension," as it seeks, with an interest that is not only observational but also participative, to interpret the meaning of actions from evaluations of concrete motivations. Habermas refers constantly to this issue by analyzing the problem and thus contributing new elements, especially from the standpoint of the linguistic turn and pragmatism.<sup>85</sup> But this is not the space to begin approaching this debate. We simply want to contextualize the problem.

*c. The Third Criterion of Demarcation: the Critical Social Sciences and Philosophy.* Adorno in his debate with Popper included in the notion of dialectics not only the social sciences and the non-analytic philosophies, but also the notion of criticism. It was then necessary to differentiate both the second and third criteria. Therefore, we want to stop to consider the third criterion which is the essential one for the purposes of this lecture and thus demonstrate the need

<sup>84</sup>See a work that caused much controversy: Winch, 1958.

<sup>85</sup>See Habermas, 1082, Chapter 2–5.

<sup>86</sup>Generally, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, the pedagogy of the oppressed by Paolo Freyre, and other critical, human and social sciences are not considered sciences by epistemologists (like Popper), psychologists, psychiatrists, economists (neo-classical economists), or psycho-pedagogues (belonging to Piaget's tradition, etc.). This means that, in fact, a particular criterion of demarcation is being used; within this criterion critical, human, and social sciences would not be sciences after all.

<sup>87</sup>I wish to provisionally refer to this economic science as one of the "functional social sciences."

<sup>88</sup>These workers are, partly, the victims visualized by Marx. On the other hand, we can formulate the contradiction within the process of globalization: the contradiction between a growing wealth of the "central" capitalist countries and the growing misery of "peripheral" countries.

<sup>89</sup>The non-consciousness of the non-intentional effects of the capitalist system becomes complicated.

<sup>90</sup>Karl Marx, (mans. 61–63, notebook XIV) in Marx, 1979, p. 1390; Spanish translation

vol. 3, p. 231.

<sup>91</sup>See the conference that I will present in the VII Seminario de Diálogo entre la ética del discurso de K. O. Appel y la ética de la liberación that will take place the November 1996 in Aachen: "Ética, material formal y crítica." Also consider # 4.2 of my *Ética de liberación: lo negativo y material en la Teoría Crítica* (forthcoming). This is the subject of the main article on "Teoría tradicional y teoría crítica" by Horkheimer, 1970. It is worth noting that in a recent work on Horkheimer (see Benhabib, 1993), the double determination (negativity and materiality) that determines the critical in Horkheimer and Adorno is not captured. From there emerges the notion of "Negative Dialectics" that is, of course, a "materialistic" dialectics in a very peculiar sense. From a monological paradigm, rooted in a pre-linguistic consciousness, one can be critical; although it is better to be critical for the sake of a discursive, linguistic, and communitarian "transformation," as we will see in the proceeding pages.

<sup>92</sup>Freud's scientific program finds in the "repression of the unconsciousness" the explanation for the cause of the various pathologies of the pulsional apparatus (material negativity): ciencia humana crítica.

for a critical ethics in the context of the current globalization and exclusion. Indeed, critical human and social sciences<sup>86</sup> have defended for over a century their own epistemological status. There is a text that is extremely clear and that defines explicitly what we would call from now on the third criterion of demarcation in epistemology. Marx's description should be read carefully:

Era evidente que, puesto que el mismo desarrollo real que daba a la economía burguesa<sup>87</sup> esa expresión implacable, a saber: la contradicción entre la creciente riqueza de la nación, en Inglaterra, y la creciente miseria (*Elend*) de los trabajadores,<sup>88</sup> y puesto que además, estas contradicciones presentaban, en la teoría de Ricardo, *una expresión teóricamente palmaria, aunque inconsciente*,<sup>89</sup> era natural, que los espíritus *que se ponían de parte (auf die Seite stellten)* del proletariado *captasen (aufgegriffen)* la contradicción ya *teóricamente puesta en claro por ellos*. El trabajo es la única fuente de valor de cambio y el único creador activo del valor de uso. *Eso decís*. Pero, por otra parte, afirmáis que el capital es todo y el trabajador no es nada o simplemente costo o producción del capital. *Os contradecís vosotros mismos*. El capital no es otra cosa que una estafa hecha al obrero. *El trabajo lo es todo*.<sup>90</sup>

In these few lines one finds a clear expression of the third criterion of demarcation I have been referring to. The first school of Frankfurt clearly understood that a theory could be critical as long as it fulfilled at least two conditions: that it be negative and that it be material.<sup>91</sup> The negativity being alluded to consists, in the first place, of the not-being-able-to-live of the oppressed and the exploited ones, of the "victims" (to use Walter Benjamin's and Emmanuel Levinas' words, which parallels Marx's notion of "workers" in the text quoted above). This is what we have termed the primal denial. In the modern globalization that we are dealing with here, such denial amounts to the misery of peripheral nations such as: Brazil, Mexico and nowadays Argentina as well; Kenya, Nigeria, India, or the Philippines. Without considering negativity there could not be critical social sciences. But, secondly, such negativity must be placed at the level of materiality; that is to say, in the content of the praxis as it refers to production, reproduction, and development of life and human corporeality. We are neither angels nor souls: we are alive, we are corporeal human beings who live and die and thus we must eat, drink, dress, study, produce art works . . . among other things. It is in this sense that negativity (alienation) emerges as materiality: misery (for Marx), pulsational repression (for Freud). Thanks to Freud and Marx the first Frankfurt school was a critical one. However, I think that from approximately

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1970, because of diverse arguments against Freud<sup>92</sup> and Marx,<sup>93</sup> the second Frankfurt School became less critical in relation to material negativity. This lack of criticism was promoted by means of various arguments against these two thinkers that were launched from a platform provided by valuable and pertinent discoveries in the linguistic and pragmatic paradigm. These discoveries served as the discursive reason for the communication community.

But a social scientific theory is *critical* not only because of its theoretical position in relation to the negative material, but also — and this is a constitutive element of criticism (a demarcation criterion) — because of its effective and *practical* allegiance with the victim. It is here, then, where problems that have not been studied nowadays — since they are out of fashion for philosophers of late capitalism<sup>94</sup> — are finally understood. The problem involves Gramsci's "organic intellectual" and Levinas' "responsibility for the other":

El ser que se *expresa* se impone, precisamente llamándose desde su miseria y desnudez sin que pueda cerrar mis oídos a su llamado [. . .] *Dejar a seres humanos sin comida es una falta que ninguna circunstancia atenúa: aquí no se aplica la distinción de lo voluntario e involuntario* [. . .] Ante el hambre de seres humanos la responsabilidad se mide objetivamente [. . .] Al desvelamiento del ser en general [Heidegger], como base del conocimiento y como sentido del ser, *pre-existe* la relación con el ente que se expresa [el Otro]; al nivel [le antecede] el nivel ético.<sup>95</sup>

It is only by investing (*stellen*), *a la* Foucault, one's own body in the cause of the victim that the scientific and explanatory reason (because after all, it is really about an explanation) captures (*begreifen*, writes Marx) the causal<sup>96</sup>

<sup>92</sup>Marx finds in the notion of "surplus value" the explanation of the cause of the proletariat's misery, the denial of the victim's materiality: *critical* social science.

<sup>93</sup>But not in a Mexico where the EZLN members mix in the jungles with "faceless men that are mountains," Mayan ethnicities that resisted the conquest in the sixteenth century now resist the process of globalization in the twentieth century."

<sup>94</sup>Levinas, 1968, p. 175.

<sup>95</sup>See the wide spectrum of the problem of the "cause" in von Wright, 1971.

<sup>96</sup>Levinas 197, p. 142. It is an *a priori* "responsibility" for all discursive reason or argument.

<sup>97</sup>As it can be gathered, Levinas dares to invert twenty five centuries of philosophy: philosophy should not be "love for knowledge," but rather a "sofophilia": knowledge for love. In the first place, love implies the whole order

of carnality, sensitivity, and the responsibility for the victim's pain; secondly, only from there one finds the "construction" of the explanation of the "causes" in the negation of the victims (because a "re"-construction of the *new*).

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>99</sup>Not related at all with Schopenhauer's notion of compassion.

<sup>100</sup>This subject is excellently discussed by the "first" Habermas (See Habermas, 1968.).

<sup>101</sup>Marx, *op. cit.*, in footnote 90.

<sup>102</sup>Here in a "positive" sense, I am referring to the social sciences that make possible the functioning and development of the current system. These sciences are *necessary* but they become fetishist sciences when they deny the existence of the *critical* social sciences which are also necessary (as rivaling scientific programs that cross-fertilize creatively in a historical dialectic that epistemology has not yet analyzed).

horizon of the victims' negativity.

"Re-sponsabilidad anterior al diálogo."<sup>97</sup> "desde la re-sponsabilidad [práctica] hacia el problema [teórico]. El problema se plantea desde la responsabilidad misma que, por otra parte, en tanto que inmediata, es sin problema. El extraordinario compromiso (*engagement*) del Otro con respecto al Tercero llama al control, a la búsqueda de la justicia, a la sociedad y al Estado, a la comparación y al tener, *al pensamiento y a la ciencia*, y al comercio y a la filosofía, y, de allí, a la anarquía, a la búsqueda del principio. La filosofía es en esta medida aportada al infinito del *ser-para-el-Otro* de la proximidad y como sabiduría del amor."<sup>98, 99</sup>

It is in this precise sense: assuming ethically and practically the position of the victims in the very social structure that oppresses them, that the social scientist becomes a *hostage* — the central ethical category in Levinas philosophy — of the dominant system functionally studied by the standard social sciences. Whoever "takes the side of" the victim runs the risk of prosecution and repression. Only the one who commits to the victims in this manner can free his/her reason, so that a scientific and social explanation of the causes of the plight of the subjugated, as an alienated entity, can be put forward. Only the one who suffers *with the victim* (com-passion)<sup>100</sup> has the appropriate perspective and becomes intelligent enough to be able to conceptualize the contradiction already made clear in one's theoretical discourse on the implacable expression (in the above quoted text by Marx), a contradiction that is cynical, one that is uttered "without consciousness." From this ethical position the social scientist can then develop a new discourse with the elements already referred to: "So you say that labor is the only source of value." Indeed:

Tal es, en realidad, la última palabra de todas las obras que mantienen [el punto de vista de] el interés (*Interesse*)<sup>101</sup> del proletariado desde las posiciones ricardianas [manteniéndose] en el terreno de su propia premisa.<sup>102</sup>

This is what Lakatos calls inadvertently "progressive science." From a new program of scientific investigation the critical social science can subsume the previous theory (the Ricardian one) and explain a "fact" that has gone unnoticed, a non-observable fact in the hegemonic paradigm. This is possible, however — a possibility unfathomable for Lakatos — from an ethical (not only practical) option which assumes rationally the victim's own interest. This "substitution" — in Levinas' terminology — of the scientist who "places him/herself" with the victim characterizes the defining moment of the criterion of demarcation between the "functional"<sup>103</sup> social sciences and the "critical" ones (a practical, historical

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and social “substitution” which implies a risk that is greater in peripheral nations suffering under dictatorship that are not only promoted but often imposed by First World countries; Odera Oruka’s assassination is an embodiment of this risk).

However, it has been written:

En los países capitalistas avanzados el nivel de vida — también en las amplias capas de la población — ha subido con todo tan lejos, que el interés por la emancipación de la sociedad ya no puede expresarse inmediatamente en términos *económicos*. La alienación ha perdido su forma, económicamente evidente, de *miseria (Elend)* [. . .] El proletariado se ha disuelto en tanto que proletariado.<sup>104</sup>

This is the way in which the ethical reflection begins to lose materiality. Economics, which is the materialist social science par excellence ceased to be critically practiced.<sup>105</sup> It is usually forgotten that “late capitalist countries” represent but a small minority of humanity. How about the rest of humanity, is this rest human? Is the critical economy (as well as a critique of economy) pertinent to them? Does it explain scientifically and ethically the “cause” of their increasing and ultimately lethal misery? Here, then, lies an ethical problem that is global and planetary rather than merely regional and provincial, given that provincialism is a way of thinking reserved only for advanced capitalist countries. The topic requires further development but in this lecture we have simply attempted to indicate its structural nature.

## § 5. ETHICAL CRITICISM OF GLOBALIZATION AS EXCLUSION

Ethics as practical philosophy, in order to be *critical*, needs of a certain diagnoses; it requires the explanatory and interpretative mediation of the *critical*

<sup>104</sup>Habermas, 1963, pp. 228–229.

<sup>105</sup>The first Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin, etc.) — a subject that we will discuss in the fourth chapter of our *Ética de la liberación* — given its members had a double experience (an experience that was ethical and not a merely an empirical one) of solidarity with victims (because they were Jews and were militantly involved in 1918 and 1919, in Germany, in social movements with revolutionary undertones) and hence creatively imagined a Critical Theory. The second School of Frankfurt lacked this double-experience. . . Would not the *Ética de la liberación* be one of the followers of the first Frankfurt School, one that adopts the Schools discursive reasons? Now, however, it addresses the situation of the victims of the world’s periphery, a periphery that faces the process of globalization of late capitalism.

<sup>106</sup>It would seem that there is an awareness of this issue when Habermas writes: “Something different happens with the political economy that in the eighteenth century competes with the rational natural law [. . .] As Political Economy, the science of economy still keeps, in terms of a theory of the crisis, a relation with the global society [. . .]. But, despite all this, it ends up destroying economics once it becomes a specialized science. [read it as “functional”] Today economic science treats the economy as a sub-system of society and dispenses with questions of legitimacy” (Habermas, 1981, vol.1, p. 19; p. 17). Economy would not be in this predicament were it practiced as a *critical* social science (as it is practiced by those who exercise the discipline as a *critical* economy, just as it was practiced by Marx in his time).

human and social sciences. We have seen the manner by which the third criterion of demarcation allows for the discernment between the mere functional social sciences and the *critical* ones.<sup>106</sup> A moral system that is purely procedural such as the Ethics of Discourse — an ethics which presupposes the impossibility of an empirical perfect symmetry among the participants involved in the argumentative community — does not allow for the use of this third criterion of demarcation, because it has abandoned the material ethic. This abandonment is based on the assumption that such an ethic is particular, linked to selfish impulses, to a “good life,” or to cultural values exempted from universalist assumptions. Morality only offers the rules for the discussion on the fundamentation of practical norms, but it cannot offer material instructions to the very same discussion; rather, it leaves the discussion of topics under the responsibility of the “experts.” But are these experts critical enough? Can discursive morality offer a criteria in order to discern which scientific experts are really functional and which are critical in relation to the system (a system that unintentionally excludes the ones who do not participate, despite their being affected by it)? None of this can be pondered by the Ethics of Discourse. Let’s then consider how can we approach the problem.

*a. The Need of Criticism from the Symmetric and Anti-Hegemonic Community of Victims.* The discursive reason whose intersubjective praxis reaches validity in a communication community could carry out its grounding and hegemonic praxis from the incumbent system<sup>107</sup> (in keeping with our topic, from the center of the World-System which begins to be globalized since the Conquest of Mexico in 1519) or from a “community of victims.” The latter could be exemplified by a group of women who become conscious of “machismo,” a group of African Americans who struggle against racial discrimination, a group of marginalized subjects who struggle against urban exclusion . . . or the challenge of peripheral cultures and nations to a World System that becomes increasingly globalized. The Ethics of Discourse has not yet imagined this *perspective*: the participants of an affected community of victims that in the hegemonic community are *excluded* or who are in an *asymmetrical* position, can conversely acquire *symmetrical* participation when they are “among themselves.” At the “bottom of history,” as a person excluded from the process of globalization (as a woman, as a peasant, as an Indian, and as a Guatemalan), a privileged victim reminds us:

Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú. Tengo veintitrés años. Quisiera dar este testimonio vivo que no he aprendido en un libro y que tampoco he

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aprendido sola ya que todo esto lo he aprendido con mi pueblo<sup>108</sup> y es algo que quiero enfocar [ . . . ]<sup>109</sup>

The discursive reason itself can be functional to the incumbent system or it can be intersubjectively critical. I think we have taken a step forward. We have departed from the strong and critical (negative and material) position of the first Frankfurt School; and, now, we also include, within the linguistic and discursive paradigm of the second Frankfurt School, such a "criticism." The criticism we are referring to has little to do with the theoretical "critical thinking" of someone like Stephen Toulmin and Hans Albert, neither does it have much to do with the Habermasian emancipation (*Emancipation*) as discursive Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*). The problem is really about an ethical criticism which departs from the notion of taking sides, empirically and intersubjectively, with the victim, considering thus its material negativity (with "a" in German). When the supportive scientist (Gramsci's "organic intellectual") has adopted this intersubjective, practical, and discursive perspective and proceeds

<sup>107</sup>It is definitely "hegemonic" if the third criterion of demarcation is not *explicitly* placed in the foreground. Yet it cannot be carried out because it is material (or the material has been abandoned at the beginning of its formal process).

<sup>108</sup>The "community of victims."

<sup>109</sup>Menchú, 1985, p. 21.

<sup>110</sup>The critical theory of Horkheimer formulated this question ambiguously, since it confused in a single program the critical social sciences and the ethical critical philosophy (a philosophy that I call *Ética de la liberación*). It is important to distinguish one from the other and to know how to articulate each one of them.

<sup>111</sup>*Grundrisse*, Notebook VII; Marx, 1974, p. 755. See Hinkelammert's lecture "Die Marxsche Wertlehre und die Philosophie der Befreiung" (Hinkelammert, 1995). In addition see my article "Marx's Economic Manuscripts of 1861-63 and the 'Concept' of Dependence" (Dussel, 1990).

<sup>112</sup>If this were to happen, the so-called transnational corporation would disappear. Such corporations operate with the average difference of *national global capitals* in relation to their organic composition: they invest productive capital of high technological development in countries with low salaries; this, in turn, gives transnational corporation an advantage when competing with the capitals from the nation where the transnational headquarters are (absorbing high salaries); they also have an

advantage over the capitals in the nations where the transnational operates (nations with a technological disadvantage). This setting allows them to transfer value (surplus value) from the periphery to the center. The transfer of surplus value is achieved by means of diverse mechanisms among which we will mention the following: the expiration of parts and whole products, collection of royalties, or simply profiting from high interests of phantom international credits. Only Marx has a theoretical categorical framework (of *critical* economy or of *critique* of the economy) that serves to "unveil" and "explain" these "facts," facts that are invisible to the "functional" economy (neo-classical, Keynesian, neo-liberal, etc.). The massive poverty of peripheral nations is a non-intentional effect of the globalization of the productive, commercial, and financial capital — a fundamental *material* structure of the World-System. Since, as we have said, products (merchandise) are symbolic and cultural objects of consumption, such a system is also a cultural system: Coca-Cola is beheld "in its beauty," one can feel its "cool softness," one can taste its "bubbly flavor" . . . it displaces traditional drinks (and really nourishing), it creates new needs and finally it must be *purchased* . . . thus transferring values to the "center" (vital human work that is objectivized). A country becomes richer while another becomes poorer; this is the contradiction that the Ricardian economist could not see in England and that we cannot see at the global level.



to project a program of scientific investigation which in turn seeks to explain — according to the best available scientific resources — the cause of the victims negativity, we come across the position from which critical social sciences develop (and also Liberation Philosophy and its corresponding ethics which functions as its necessary introduction).<sup>110</sup> So, when Marx writes:

Del hecho de que la ganancia pueda estar por debajo del plusvalor o sea de que el capital pueda intercambiarse por una ganancia pero sin valorarse en sentido estricto, se desprende que no sólo los capitalistas individuales, *sino las naciones* pueden intercambiar continuamente entre sí [. . .] sin que por ello hayan de obtener ganancias iguales. Uno puede apropiarse constantemente de una parte del plustrabajo de la otra, por el que nada da a cambio, sólo que en este caso, ello no ocurre en la misma medida que entre el capitalista y el obrero.<sup>111</sup>

Surely, Marx was not especially interested, during his life time, in the competition of capital (and the national global capital) in the World Market. This, however, does interest me, since it has to do with the problem of the globalization of the productive capital and the globalization of the market. The surplus relation between the capitalist and the worker is intricately related to the “essence” of capital — which is what, historically, interested Marx and what was ethically presented to the English workers, in order to explain the cause of their material negativity: the misery of the working class. My interest in the problem of competition among national capital has to do with the misery of peripheral nations (with its peoples, ethnicities, groups, working class, etc.), as national capital is transferred as surplus from one nation to the other. Globalization has not yet advanced to the point of erasing national borders.<sup>112</sup>

The intersubjective consensus that claims validity and that is reached in the community of victims, a consensus that also integrates critical and scientific “explanations” is, however, inimical to the valid consensus of the “hegemonic community.” For instance, the consensus of North American and European popular opinion about peripheral countries is the opinion which asserts that peoples from these countries do not work, that they are racially and rationally inferior, that they deserve their misery for their lack of a competitive edge, etc. All this accounts for a growing xenophobia as was ostensible in California during the debate around proposition 187, or in South Africa, or in the former socialist Eastern Europe. All this can be positively explained from the stand point of the social sciences used by the dominant system. It is not merely a coincidence that these sciences are formulated in Harvard, London, or Frankfurt, or that the neo-classical economy, the economic neo-liberalism or the liberal

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"minimal" state came from Chicago. All these social scientific theories elaborated in the North, along with the recent geopolitical and military theories that buttress the fight against drugs, are nothing but an effective cover up for the actual occupation of the countries in the South.

Ethics has much to reflect and much to say in this sense. The little work by Kant *The Perpetual Peace* was an attempt during his time to propose a universal principle on international relations. This proposition is stated as follows:

Las acciones referidas al derecho de otros seres humanos cuya máxima no admiten publicidad (*Publizität*) son injustas.<sup>113</sup>

That a maxim ought to be articulated publicly has to do with a formal and procedural principle. But once again we are riddled by uncertainties as we ponder our contemporary reality; so, can the international organisms begin to dialogue and discuss in a public manner, without taking into account a procedural requirement which amounts to a minimum of symmetry among the participants? Is there not power to veto in the United Nations? Is not there an asymmetrical dominance exerted by the "Group of Seven" (G7)<sup>114</sup> over decisions of economic and political world relevance? (a group which, as I write these lines today July 1, 1996, is gathering in Lyon).<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, what is the criteria that guide this discussion? Is it not true that the valorization of value, of capital, the possibility of overcoming the crisis and of increasing the profits of transnational corporations and banks constitutes the criteria that guide this conversation? What does ethics have to say, apart from the establishment of certain rules, in order to determine the symmetrical participation of the affected ones, in order to reach a sense of fairness by establishing norms whose possible conditions are, beforehand, known to be empirically inexistent? Apel in his talk on the dialogue East-West says with optimism in reference to "Towards a Macroethics of Humanity"<sup>116</sup>:

<sup>113</sup>*Zum ewigen Frieden*, B 99, A 93; Kant, 1968, Vol. 9, p. 245. 1A maxim which cannot be published without provoking the failure of its very purposes, that must remain secret in order to achieve the desired success, that cannot be publicly proclaimed without causing the resentment in all towards my intentions [ . . . ] This maxim will never be based on nothing but injustice" (Ibid., B 100, A 94). It would be good to relay this to Admiral Canarys against Hitler or to the heroes that died under Pinochet and Somoza's hands. Kant's law is applicable to a metropolitan "civil state." How would Kant have thought had he had been an Afro-Caribbean slave in Jamaica during the eighteenth century? Would he have made public his plan to flee the sugar plantation in order to reach the Central Ameri-

can Atlantic coast, thus reaching freedom?

<sup>114</sup>In the United Nations there are over one hundred and fifty nations represented. Are these seven nations more human, and do they have more of a right and dignity than the rest? Would not the reason be simply based on the fact that these seven nations are more powerful and richer? We have schematically shown historical aspects of the accumulation of this wealth.

<sup>115</sup>I read in *Cinco días* (Madrid), July 1, 1996: "The G-7 warns that globalization will increase unemployment and inequality" (p. 25).

<sup>116</sup>Apel, 1992.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>119</sup>"Culture as the Ideological Battleground," in Featherstone, 1993, p. 43.

Actualmente vivimos, por primera vez en la historia, en una civilización planetaria [. . .] la unidad de la historia humana se ha realizado hoy en un sentido [. . .] como una unidad éticamente deseable, y en parte existente, de cooperación respecto a la formación, preservación y reforma de las condiciones comunes de la civilización del mundo actual.<sup>117</sup>

After grounding the universal ethical principle that makes itself present in those moral institutions, he concludes again rather optimistically:

Esta fundamentación aparentemente esotérica está, en cierto sentido, *bien confirmada hoy* [. . .] junto con aquellas declaraciones públicas que acompañan a los cientos de diálogos y reuniones sobre asuntos de importancia vital para la humanidad [. . .] pues estas reuniones y diálogos, en la mayoría de los casos, intentan al menos ser algo semejante a los discursos prácticos, luchando por soluciones aceptables para todos los seres humanos afectados.<sup>118</sup>

All impoverished peripheral countries, the oppressed classes of the center and the periphery, the Afro-Americans and Hispanics in the USA, women all over the world, the homeless children from Bogota or Sao Paulo, the elderly in miserable retirement homes, the millions of marginalized people, and the millions of immigrants who flee their countries for economic, political and racial reasons; all these victims attest to the fact that Apel's optimism is misplaced due to the enormous asymmetry that characterizes all those meetings and dialogues where the affected ones are for the most part absent and the decisions taken are not "acceptable" by the great majority of humanity.

*b. From the Ethical Duties of the Production, Reproduction and Development of Life of Each One of the Community Human Beings.* It seems apparent that the universal and discursive principle is by definition the last rational instance. However such is not the case. Wallerstein writes:

We can assert, if we wish, that the principle of universalism both on a world-wide scale and within each of the sovereign states that constitute the interstate system is hypocritical. But it is precisely because there is in reality a hierarchy of states within the interstate system and a hierarchy of citizens within each sovereign state that the ideology of universalism matters.<sup>119</sup>

The domination among states, cultures and individuals can be measured by the quality of life, by the chance that life offers each of the affected parties to the full realization of his/her life. Nonetheless, for this realization to occur, human

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life must be one of the criterion also (not only as a discursive and public inter-subjectivity); it must be a positive, universal criterion of practical truth (of the ethical and material reason), a criterion from which an ethical, material, universal and positive principle can be grounded, a point of departure of the negative or critical principle (of the commitment to avoid the death of humanity).

As we have written, we propose the following initial description of the material universal principle of ethics, the principle of corporeality as sensibility, containing a pulsional order, a principle that functions as a cultural and valorative (hermeneutical and symbolic) point of reference for every norm, action, institution or ethical system, a principle whose point of departure is the generality of human life. He who acts ethically<sup>120</sup> ought to reproduce and develop in a responsible manner (as an obligation or ethical inclination towards the *good* as opposed to the *right*) the life of each and every other human being, forming a rule that could be articulated as a normative truth claim (not yet validated) in a life community. The point of departure, in cultural and historical terms,<sup>121</sup> ought to be a "worthy life" that is shared in solidarity with humanity and having humanity as an ultimate reference point, thus showing universalizing claims<sup>122</sup> (a "worthy life" with a manner to interpret happiness and with a sort

<sup>120</sup>To make explicit the "ethical" action is redundant, since to be ethical is to be human. But in this case the redundancy is not gratuitous because it emphasizes the intention of the enunciation.

<sup>121</sup>Even in a non-conventional culture, where each individual must rationally justify his/her decisions, and not only act by following the mores and conventions of tradition, the project of argumentative and intersubjective critique (by Apel or Habermas) are already a project of worthy, a non-conventional life, a project that blooms in a historical culture and in a given moment, etc.

<sup>122</sup>The claim of universality in every culture (from the Eskimo or Bantú to the Aztec Nahuatl or Modern European non-conventional cultures) indicates the presence of the universal material principle *within every culture*; this opposes ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism or cultural fundamentalism is the attempt to impose on other cultures the claim of universality inherent to *my own (our) culture*, even before such claim was discursively or interculturally tested. Each culture's serious claim to universality must be tested in a rational dialogue whenever there is a confrontation of cultures. And when cultures historically confront each other, the dialogue is only possible from the claim of universality that char-

acterizes each one of these cultures; *and materially, form the principle of content* that has to do with the reproduction and development that *underpins* each culture and all cultural subjects. This process allows for a material unveiling of real articulations, once the dialogue has been initiated regarding the manner in which a *culture reproduces and develops, in a concrete fashion, human lives*. The intersubjective and discursive moment is precisely the procedural moment which *formally* allows for such a dialogue without denying, however, the logic of the *material content* from which the participants must depart. All this was brought to failure by the *Eurocentricism that Modernity* imposed on peripheral cultures from the end of the fifteenth century until the present (See Dussel, 1993).

<sup>123</sup>In the irrevocable sense indicated by Levinas. But this is also the case if one considers all the necessary mediations, since any human, being a moment in the complex structure of human development, cannot be declared as being *absolutely* innocent of anything, not even of non-intentional repercussions. There is always a sort of (direct, indirect, conscious or non-intentional) complicity in the victimization of the other, a complicity that binds us to all.

of reference to the values implicit in the understanding of human beings).

This material principle of ethics includes the point of departure and contains the “matter” (*Inhalt*) of all the forthcoming moments (formal, procedural, factual, critical, or liberational). This moment constitutes the ethical content of all praxis and of all future projects of development: under no circumstances can it be denied nor can it be overcome or ignored. It is the place from which the facticity of the quotidian and ethical world as such is established. It is not merely a pathological or particular horizon that can be discarded in order to reach an *a priori* horizon of transcendental principles — as in the case of Kant or Apel. Neither does it consist exclusively of the cultural horizon — as in the case with the communitarians — or the incommensurable horizon — as in the case of the postmodern. But, furthermore, although such is the necessary departure point which it always presupposed in any moral system or ethics, it should not be forgotten that such is not a sufficient horizon, since in order for the validity or factibility of ethical critique, one must resort to other principles of co-determination.

But this very same *positive* principle is transformed into a negative critical *principle*. Ethical principles ought to be grounded in sets of criteria; they must live by passing from “to be a life” to “ought to be a life.” The following example can clarify the question:

1. This is a hungry victim; therefore his/her life is in danger (it is a factual judgment or a descriptive enunciation).

2. I am re-sponsible<sup>123</sup> for the hunger of this victim. Ergo (a normative enunciation is founded).

3. I ought (as an ethical obligation) first of all, to criticize the norm, action, institution or ethical system partially or thoroughly, since those are the cause of this negativity of victimhood. Furthermore:

4. I ought to transform the norm, action, institution, or structures that are responsible for such negation of the victim.

The point is then to judge negatively the system (norm, action, etc.) as the mediation that causes victims. This is the *Krisis par excellence*. This is the final judgment (in the manner of Benjamin’s description of Paul Klee’s work) carried out by the Court (from the standpoint of the victims) of History (*kriterion*) which measures all norms, actions, institutions or ethical systems in accordance to their goodness (or evil). To judge the system with a negative “no” is preambled by the intention of “not” producing victims (if these victims did not exist, this critique would not be necessary). Therefore, the reason why the oldest and most venerable imperatives of humanity were always negative ones can be

comprehended. Here one may place Wellmer's proposal<sup>124</sup> on the strength of the universal imperative as a prohibition of a non-generalizable maxim.

The ethical and critical principle in its negative moments is, first and foremost, negative as a judgement related to the non-reproduction of the life of each human being; and, positive, as a demand for the development of the life of each human being. This principle can take approximately the following form: whoever acts ethically and critically has recognized that the victims of any norm, action, institution, or ethical system have been denied the possibility to live (in totality or in partial moments). Therefore, one is obliged, in the first place, to deny the "goodness" of the "cause" of such a victim; that is to say, to criticize the "non-truth" (the *Unwahrheit* of Adorno) of the moment that causes the victim (which from this moment onwards, appears as the dominant one). Secondly, it is imperative to create in common solidarity the means in order to transform this situation.

This material and critical universal principle makes it possible to orientate abstractly and fundamentally the political organizations, conferences, forums, and debates praised by the Ethics of Discourse, gatherings that take place in reference to the process of globalization. However, in respect of this material and universal principle, the victims ought to become aware of their asymmetric situation; they should be moved to struggle for their recognition and for their rights, so that the impact of their acquired awareness moves beyond the restricted space of these gatherings and, thus, becomes useful in their daily lives. Liberation Ethics, then, quite beyond its formal principles will also articulate a material principle which can be exerted negatively as a critique of the World System that, due to its contents, becomes increasingly globalized at these levels: economic, ecological, psychological, etc.

*c. The Philosophical Importance of North-South and South-South Discursive Dialogue.* Philosophy, in its ethical dimension, has a responsibility, then, in this "orientation." It must promote a discussion between philosophers from the North and those from the South. In the promotion of this dialogue it is deserving to mention the asymmetry that characterizes these two regions: the philosophers from the North who enjoy an hegemony of material power in the form of universities and other educational structures, publishing houses, journals, research centers, funds, scholarships and grants, alliance with diverse areas: intelligence, the military, and transnationals, etc. Conversely, philosophers in the South must develop a genuine discourse that springs from its underdeveloped situation, from its oppressive and marginalized reality, and even from its ex-

<sup>124</sup>See Wellmer, 1986, I: "El programa kantiano."

<sup>125</sup>Professor of the University of Nairobi

(Kenya), President of the African Philosophical Association, personal friend of the author of these notes.

clusion. This dialogue would endow philosophers from the South with a recognition amongst their peers and a recognition within civil society. From this recognition, philosophers in the South can then proceed to elaborate a critique of the peripheral systems that work in complicity with a globalization that excludes and destroys the cultural identities of the subjugated nations.

But, furthermore, it becomes necessary for the South to count on the aid of the North in order to initiate South to South philosophical dialogues i.e., dialogues among participants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In this manner the acute problems, elicited non-intentionally from the process of globalization, could be dealt with solely from the demands characteristic of the South, thus dispensing with the tampering mediation (usually acritical and influential) of structures from the North. Along with Prof. Odera Oduka,<sup>125</sup> I organized an international committee for the South-South philosophical dialogue in December 1994, in Cairo. He was scheduled to participate in a panel organized by the APA in April of 1995, in Seattle, Washington; but he was assassinated in 1995 by one of those dictatorial governments in the peripheral world that are fearful of critical philosophers. His death amounts to a testimony of loyalty to criticism, to peripheral African philosophy, a truly “universal” and nascent philosophy.

## **§ 6. CONCLUSION: THE PRINCIPLE OF LIBERATION IN GLOBALIZATION’S EXCLUSIONS**

These are nothing but a few words for a future discussion. Given that globalization produces non-intentional devastating effects in at least two thousand million humans and in countless cultures, cultures and peoples known as the victims of such process of globalization, Liberation Ethics must still forewarn that the function of ethics in relation to globalization does not end in the provision of discursive regulations needed to reach a consensus from which specific measures can be implemented. Its function does not end either in offering abstract guidelines (no matter how sufficient they might be) for the principle of reproducing and helping to develop the life of any human subject — a principle that is universal and from which the discursive principle functions as its moral mediation of application. Liberation Ethics must still take into consideration the factibility of the decisions to which it arrives based upon the fulfillment of the two principles already discussed: the material and the formal principles.

Indeed, in the peripheral countries the *factibility* of the best decisions, the ones that are praiseworthy and meritorious, fix absolute limits: what is possible (from a technical, economic, political, etc., point of view) determines a third area

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of the action and brings it about that a decision reached by consensus, a mediation of human life, becomes effective and actually possible. There is, then, an ethical principle of factibility that subsumes instrumental reason within the evaluation of the goals (from the material principle of life and the moral discursive principle): the principle of factibility should be nothing but a mediation for life decided rationally and symmetrically by the affected ones. What is thus done is then “good.” So, the process of globalization is “good” for the following instances: for certain countries, certain cultures, for corporations, political parties and some scientific and philosophical communities. But for the victims, as Adorno would say, the truthful becomes untruthful; and concerning the reproduction of life and symmetric participation, the “efficient” becomes inefficient. The ethical factibility for the reproduction and development of the life of the members of impoverished and peripheral countries and devastated cultures consists of halting such process of globalization, a globalization whose only criteria is the “efficient competition” in the market place (a principle of formal and instrumental factibility devoid of any ethical criterion or principle). This criteria solely tied to the “valorization of value” is responsible for the ecological destruction and ultimately for the destruction of life on earth and the concrete life of most of humanity. It is then at this juncture that an Ethics that founds the motivation of historical subjects (the victims in the process of conscientization) is necessary, for the purpose of serving as a background for forums, conferences, and debates that seek to establish rational and ethical limitations to the “efficiency of the Total Market” in the midst of globalization. However it is also necessary to found materially the norms, actions, institutions, and ethical systems, because the daily plight of the victims requires it in countless ways and because this plight calls for “new social movements” (feminist and ecological movements, poor nations, oppressed social classes, indigenous ethnicities, marginal urban populations, immigrants, political refugees, anti-racial groups, homeless children, the unprotected elderly and so many other “liberation fronts”). The forging of a critical Liberation Ethics must occur among these *new historical subjects* to justify their goals, programs and decisions.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>In Chapter six of the already mentioned *Ética de la liberación* we have discussed what

we have now termed as the “Principle of Liberation,” not included in this lecture.

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